



21st Century Legal Career Series

Where the Jobs Are: The Hottest Attorney and JD-Advantage Opportunities

Establishing a satisfying legal career in this challenging, competitive legal employment environment requires an aspiring law student, current student or graduate to research and investigate opportunities beyond traditional practice areas. To be successful, you also need to know what the future will bring. Is today's hot practice area or work regularly providing substantial billable hours or a secure job with decent pay and benefits, going to be there when you graduate and beyond?

No one has a crystal ball, but **Richard L. Hermann** has spent his career— more than 30 years— researching, evaluating, and accurately predicting where the career opportunities will be for law graduates. He has counseled attorneys from new lawyers to 20-year practitioners on how and where to hunt for the next, best option. Even during times when law firm jobs were more readily available, Hermann also always looked to see where else a legal education could be put to work. In the 1990s, he wrote three editions of *JD Preferred: 600+ Jobs You Can Do with a Law Degree (Other Than Practice Law)* and says today the number of that type of job exceeds 1,000.

If you are thinking about going to law school, you need to do more than score well on the LSAT and put together a stellar application. While both are important, taking the time to consider your law school options in terms of your future employment interests and opportunities is also critical. Many law students have only a vague notion of what they want — or can — do with a JD when they begin their studies. Too often their decisions on what courses to take or where to intern or work during law school are made without looking ahead to future employment goals.

This *21st Century Legal Career Guide* is intended as an introduction to the range of employment opportunities available to JD graduates. In it Hermann uses his "Practice Area Analysis Template," developed over several decades, to evaluate emerging practice areas and future growth in both mainstream and JD Preferred (a.k.a. JD Advantage) employment. To qualify for inclusion in this Guide and therefore be a "hot" and sustainable legal career, the field had to satisfy most, if not all, of the following Template criteria:

- 1. Supply and Demand.** *Does the demand for talent exceed the supply of qualified individuals?*
- 2. Number of Job Opportunities.** *Does the practice area offer a large number of job opportunities relative to other practice options?*
- 3. Sustainability.** *Does the practice area have staying power?*
- 4. An Upward Curve.** *Is the practice area a growth industry?*
- 5. Geographic Scope.** *Are jobs available nationwide, or at least in a large number of geographic locations?*
- 6. Affinity Group Growth.** *Are organizations of like-minded professionals increasing their membership rolls?*
- 7. Relative Ease of Entry.** *Can the learning curve be ascended rapidly by a novice attorney? Is affordable supplemental education or training available?*
- 8. Ideally, It Should Be New or Different.** *Does the practice area allow opportunities for practitioners to be among those who are "first-past-the-post?"*
- 9. Distinctive Value Proposition/Competitive Advantage.** *Is practice area knowledge able to provide elements of a unique selling proposition for a future job campaign?*
- 10. Compensation.** *Does this practice area allow someone to manage his/her student debt repayment obligations effectively?*
- 11. Threat Analysis.** *Is the practice potentially subject to substitution of a human lawyer by a disruptive technology such as artificial intelligence (AI)...or something else? If so, how soon could this happen?*

The **21st Century Legal Career Series** publications highlight practice areas and employment opportunities for you to explore as you consider your choice of law school, what courses to take once enrolled and where to find success in your legal career. Below are overviews of each of the topics. Once you identify career fields of interest to you, take the next step and investigate further with the detailed, concise booklets featured in Hermann's *21st Century Legal Career Series*. The Series booklets provide an in-depth look at each emerging hot employment area including sections on: The Work; Where the Jobs Are; What Does It Pay; Breaking In; JD Advantage Job Opportunities; How to Get Advance Notice of Job Opportunities .

Vol. 1 Data Protection Law: The Brave New Legal World

The current—and future—demand for attorneys who understand the legal implications of privacy and cyber threats and how to manage and defend against them, and both assess and control the damage they wreak, is intense. Data protection law is one of today's hottest practice areas and one that is likely to be just as hot an arena of business, personal, and legal concern for many years to come.

Buy the print edition at the NALP [bookstore](#) or the electronic version at <http://www.amazon.com/dp/B06WW8W8B5>.

Vol. 2 Careers in Compliance: JDs Wanted

Compliance is exploding all over the map. The U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) (www.bls.gov) says that compliance is one of the fastest growing occupations in the U.S. A cascade of laws and regulations, plus government enforcement, has also upgraded the nature of the compliance function. Even in a time of deregulation, the forecast for hiring is still strong due to the large number of regulators and complexity of the regulations particularly in the financial services, healthcare and education industries. Consequently, candidates armed with law degrees are viewed very favorably by employers seeking compliance professionals.

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Vol.3 Health Law: Career Opportunities in a Fast-Changing Environment

Health law jobs are abundant, due to: the Affordable Care Act (ACA) and the continuing turmoil surrounding healthcare reform; HIPAA and its Omnibus Rule; healthcare costs, which have risen at three times the inflation rate for 30+ years; poor quality care—the World Health Organization (WHO) ranks the U.S. healthcare system a dismal 37th in the

world; technological innovation; globalization; an aging population; and regulatory burdens affecting millions of businesses and individuals.

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Vol.4 Energy Law: Fueling a Dynamic Legal Career

Six factors, including energy independence and technological innovation, have transformed energy law from a niche practice confined to a narrow geographic area into a wide-ranging endeavor that has gone global. Energy law is destined to be a central focus of legal concern as far out as the eye can see; consequently, an arena that is a job-creating juggernaut and one that aspiring attorneys should carefully consider.

The dramatic emergence of cost-effective extraction technologies such as fracking and horizontal drilling, along with the rise of renewables, has vastly expanded the number of energy legal job opportunities. This is particularly true of some of the JD-Advantage jobs discussed in this booklet.

Buy the print edition at the NALP [bookstore](#) or the electronic version at <http://www.amazon.com/dp/B072FDH6TM>.

Vol.5 "Soft" Intellectual Property Law: IP Opportunities for Non-STEM Attorneys

This is the best time in history to contemplate a legal career in intellectual property (IP) regardless of your educational background aside from law school. Whether you combine your law degree with a STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) background, or come to law from a purely liberal arts orientation, there are exciting opportunities for you in intellectual property.

IP has changed dramatically in the 21st century and now encompasses far more than patent law. The major soft IP practice areas offering JD Advantage opportunities are trademarks, copyrights, intellectual asset management, technology licensing and commercialization and to a lesser extent, IP rights enforcement. The surge in soft IP has generated more than 30 JD Advantage job titles.

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Vol. 6 Risk Management: The Indispensable Profession

Risk management is the process of identifying and managing threats to an organization, including its very survival. Risk management has been a rising JD Advantage profession for almost two decades, and one in which attorneys can enjoy a very rewarding career. It is estimated that approximately 20 percent of risk managers have a law degree.

Buy the print edition at the NALP [bookstore](#) or the electronic version at <http://www.amazon.com/dp/B071VPVX5T>.

Vol. 7 The Administrative Law Revolution: Learning to Litigate in a Forgiving Environment

Administrative litigation is one of the hottest law practice areas going, and it is heating up even more, due to demographics. Two demographic phenomena are hitting the U.S. at the same time: (1) Age. 78 million Baby Boomers (Americans born between 1946 and 1964) are “aging up” at a rate of 10,000 per day); (2) Veterans. The U.S. now has 26 million veterans.

In addition to the “Big Three”—Social Security Disability Income cases, Medicare appeals, and Veterans appeals, a variety of other federal and state forums hear administrative cases.

Buy print edition at the NALP [bookstore](#) or the electronic version at <http://www.amazon.com/dp/B0725WR4Y9>.

Vol. 8 Digital Assets Practice: Three New Practice Opportunities in One

The march of technology has created a vast storehouse of individual and corporate digital assets. Until very recently, these were not included in people’s estate plans. But since estate plans are designed to pass assets to one’s heirs, digital assets are becoming increasingly important factors in estate planning. Digital assets have also become central to business success and survival, and must be addressed in business succession plans and in mergers and acquisitions.

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Vol. 9 The Education Sector: Overwhelmed by Law

American education is experiencing tectonic shifts that bode very well for legal employment. These result from a variety of factors—globalization, technology, dissatisfaction with dismal academic results, runaway tuition costs, and regulatory complexity. Education is undergoing creative destruction that is throwing over old ways of doing things such as delivery of learning while creating new opportunities in both mainstream legal venues and JD Advantage realms.

Look for continuing increases in attorney involvement at the K-12 level as the legal needs of school districts are growing rapidly. Increasing reliance on technology represents an enormous change in the way schools must organize themselves and do business. Attorneys will be heavily involved in nurturing these transitions. The increasing

complexity of campus life mandates that many legal and law-related staff functions need more specialized attention creating additional JD Advantage jobs.

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Vol. 10 Law Teaching and Training: Law School and Way Beyond

U.S. law schools are a mature industry and not a great place these days to be looking for teaching positions. But that does not mean that law teaching jobs are static or disappearing. There are far more law teaching positions available outside of law schools than within. Attorneys now teach law courses in undergraduate institutions, graduate departments, paralegal schools, foreign universities, government, corporations and even law firms.

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Vol. 11 Insurance Legal Careers: Opportunity in Expected—and Unexpected—Places

The Insurance industry is doing very well and continues to thrive regardless of the ups and downs of the global or national economies. Insurance jobs for attorneys are proliferating. The number and diversity of both mainstream and law-related jobs favoring candidates with a JD is large and growing. The insurance industry knows from experience that lawyers bring both a strong skill set and dogged work ethic to their jobs.

Most mainstream legal jobs in insurance companies are in the corporate in-house counsel office. JD Advantage jobs can be found throughout insurance companies and occupy almost 50 job titles.

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Vol. 12 JD Advantage Jobs in Corporations: Expanding the Legal Function

As a rule, corporations do not hire new law graduates for their in-house counsel offices. Instead, they favor lateral candidates armed with a few years of experience. That is not the case, however, for JD Advantage jobs that have emerged in corporations in large numbers in the 21st century. The mere fact of having a law degree is becoming increasingly prized by companies for these positions. The focus here is on the corporate departments that hire a substantial number of law grads for JD Advantage positions including: Compliance, Due Diligence, Ethics, Risk Management, Technology Commercialization, Real Estate.

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Vol. 13 Tricks of the Trade (and Professional) Associations: A Huge “Hidden” Legal Job Market

Almost 1.5 million nonprofits are registered with the Internal Revenue Service. Associations do not come immediately to mind when you encounter the term “nonprofit.” They should, because many of them share four features that should be of interest to every attorney: (1) They have substantial assets (more than \$2 trillion in the aggregate); (2) They employ tens of thousands of attorneys; (3) You can find these attorneys in places other than just the in-house counsel office; and (4) They are corporations. Consequently, they share many of the structural features of their for-profit counterparts. Lawyers who work for their in-house counsel offices have many of the same responsibilities as their commercial company brethren. Like commercial corporations, associations also hire lawyers for a variety of JD Advantage jobs.

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Vol. 14 Trains, Planes, and Automobiles: Reinventing Transportation Law

We are poised on the cusp of the biggest revolution in transportation since the invention of the automobile in the late 19th century—self-driving car and truck technology. This revolution is going to affect everyone’s daily existence and a lot of attorneys’ livelihoods. This topic demonstrates how one of the most important job-search and legal career strategies you can adopt is to understand as much as you can about the technology as well as the law.

Transportation is one of those dynamic industries where technological innovation has accelerated far beyond the law’s ability to understand, manage, or regulate it. Anytime this happens, such a “law-technology gap” creates attorney and often JD Advantage job and career opportunities.

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Vol. 15 I, Robot Lawyer: Opportunities and Threats in an Orwellian World

Robotics law has emerged because robots are such an increasingly important presence in society and the economy. They are central to innovation and advanced manufacturing, are rapidly moving beyond the factory into homes and transportation, and are being “outfitted” with increasingly sophisticated artificial intelligence (AI). Robotics and AI will

require a vast body of law and regulation. This, in turn, is guaranteed to generate job opportunities for attorneys.

Attorneys who understand the emerging law as it develops will have an enormous advantage as AI/robotics continue to develop and expand into every corner of global society. The ones who master this practice will have a decided market advantage as time passes. Moreover, those lawyers who also learn about the technology will rise to the top.

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Vol. 16 Financial Services: A Wealth of Evolving Opportunities Financial services is an immense and increasingly complicated industry, comprised of tens of thousands of private sector organizations (banks and insurance companies being the most numerous) as well as a large number of public sector regulators and monitors at both the federal and state levels. A number of major legislative developments have transformed the financial services industry in the 21st century, kindling dramatic attorney and JD Advantage job creation.

Anytime you run across a practice area in which change is a constant and populated by multiple players, that is very good news for attorneys. It keeps demand high in addition to offering interesting work that is intellectually challenging and ongoing.

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Vol. 17 Elder Law: Riding the Age Wave

Elder Law is a practice area often overlooked or deemed slow-moving and stodgy by legal job seekers. Not anymore. That all changed on January 1, 2011, when the first Baby Boomer turned 65. Baby Boom demographics are unprecedented. Beginning in 2011 and not ending until 2029, 80 million have, are, and will turn 65 at the rate of 10,000 a day every day. That's a lot of potential clients.

This most populous and prosperous generation ever is now confronting both the health and financial issues attendant upon age.

Elder Law also encompasses the growing epidemic of financial fraud targeting older Americans, which costs seniors an estimated \$2.9 billion annually. Elder financial abuse is where financial services meet social services. It is also where legal practitioners can hop on board an emerging, highly remunerative practice area that is creating legal and JD-Advantage jobs throughout the nation.

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Vol. 18 Nontraditional Family Law: Serving the "New Normal"

This emerging and burgeoning specialty practice is scrambling to catch up with the demographic and social upheavals affecting the American family. The traditional family model—a mother, father, and children—is now found in only about 25 percent of the nation's households.

The legal needs of nontraditional families are often different from those of the traditional family and present a growing opportunity for legal representation. Nontraditional family law is an evolving practice. There are many different family structures and family law is in the early stages of dealing with them in an organized way. Representation includes counseling clients on formalizing domestic partnerships, pursuing benefits, domestic and international adoption, alternative reproduction, financial matters, as well as all of the issues customarily associated with the end of relationships.

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These are 18 of the hottest legal fields in the 21st century... to date and into the future. Some of these are traditional practice areas that have been energized by recent developments, such as Nontraditional Family Law; others are entirely new, such as Digital Assets Practice.

For news highlighting legal employment opportunities, advice on job hunting strategies and career management skills, as well as updates on the Series publication schedule, visit [LegalCareerView.com](#).

And.... don't believe the prevailing, uninformed mantra that there are no jobs out there for attorneys!

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